

SPORTS FOR JUSTICE

How big sport can protect the most vulnerable

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mega sporting events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games often bring great benefits to host nations. These rewards are, however, not evenly distributed.

The most vulnerable and marginalised people living in host cities often face violations of their basic rights, including forced evictions. It is clear from the experience of Brazil and previous host nations across the world that the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) could play a more significant role to ensure their events are just and sustainable.

Caritas Australia recommends that world sporting bodies, including FIFA and the IOC, immediately put in place any measures deemed necessary to:

- protect human rights;
- ensure that sustainable development principles are integrated into all phases of the events;
- ensure that all people in host cities and countries, especially the most marginalised, can participate in decision making; and
- broaden current reporting to include contractually binding “minimum standards” which mitigate impacts on local communities

INTRODUCTION

"No one can remain insensitive to the inequalities that persist in the world ... the Brazilian people, particularly the humblest among you, can offer the world a valuable lesson in solidarity, a word that is too often forgotten or silenced because it is uncomfortable ... I would like to make an appeal to those in possession of greater resources, to public authorities and to all people of good will who are working for social justice: never tire of working for a more just world, marked by greater solidarity."¹

- Pope Francis, 2013

Pope Francis' words, spoken in a Rio de Janeiro favela (slum), to a country of over 123 million Catholics,² resonated with many who have concerns about the plight of the poorest of the poor in Brazil. These concerns have steadily grown in the lead up to Brazil hosting the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics.

Throughout 2012 and 2013, Brazil experienced a series of mass protests. The initial concerns of protesters were an unsustainable rise in public transport costs and a rise in the cost of living.³ These protests coincided with the commencement of the 2013 Confederations Cup – an important international competition in the lead up to the FIFA World Cup. In an effort to clear land and build adequate infrastructure for the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics in Brazil, many favela communities have been affected by forced evictions with little or no compensation. Protestors were concerned that these evictions – and other negative impacts, including the exploitation of construction workers – were taking place in the broader context of massive public infrastructure spending while essential national services like the education and health systems remain chronically underfunded.⁴

As the official international aid and development agency of the Catholic Church, Caritas Australia respects and works to advance the inherent rights of all peoples. Caritas Australia believes that host nations of mega sporting events should place social sustainability, respect for human dignity and the common good at the centre of their event planning and staging.

The FIFA and the IOC must play a larger role in protecting the rights of vulnerable and marginalised communities at all stages of their events. To do so will require “overcoming obstacles caused by fast-track development and by the spatial, temporal and financial concentration implied by the games.”⁵

THE BENEFITS AND COSTS OF HOSTING MEGA SPORTING EVENTS.

Mega sporting events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Summer and Winter Olympic Games are some of the largest and most highly-attended events in the world, bringing together hundreds of thousands of people, while billions more watch the events through television broadcast and online streaming.⁶

While the central theme of these events is competitive sports, it is argued that the events have a much wider impact on participating countries and host communities, by fostering peaceful relations, broadening cultural understanding and harnessing goodwill, for instance.⁷ They often stimulate substantial public and private investment, upgraded infrastructure and growth in tourism. Aside from these tangible benefits, mega sporting events are also argued to improve social cohesion, increase cultural understanding and civic pride through the improved image and status of the host destination.⁸

As the costs of staging these events have steadily climbed, an increasing emphasis has been placed on cost benefit analysis as a way for hosts to justify their bids and forecast the likely impact of hosting. There are two critical limitations to this analytical tool.⁹

First, the majority of economic analyses occur before the event. A study by the Department of Economics at Indiana State University concluded that post-event studies have consistently found no evidence that the actual positive economic impacts from mega sporting events are even remotely approaching the estimates detailed in the pre-event economic impact studies.¹⁰

Second, many of the costs and benefits associated with mega events are difficult or impossible to quantify. This results in nations over-emphasising intangible benefits such as national "pride" and/or "spirit", as well as a tendency to omit difficult to quantify costs such as the unequal distribution of games' benefits.¹¹ All too often the "hidden costs" of hosting a mega sporting event, such as evictions, disproportionately affect the most marginalised in the community.

A three year study released by the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) in Geneva (2007) provided detailed analyses of global Olympic related housing impacts and presented evidence of the negative impacts on low income renters and homeless people in the host city of every Summer Olympic Games since 1988, including displacement and forced evictions.¹² Over the past two decades the Olympics have displaced more than two million people, often disproportionately affecting disadvantaged groups.¹³ In preparation for the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games 720,000 people were forcibly evicted. Over 1.25 million people were displaced due to Olympic-related urban development in the lead up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics. 1,000 people were forcibly evicted from their homes or business premises in the lead up to the London Olympics.¹⁴ According to COHRE¹⁵ the number of people affected by housing rights violations in the context of mega events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics is staggering.¹⁶

Human rights campaigners say South African authorities forcibly moved thousands of the most impoverished community members to settlements away from the city to present a good image of the nation during the FIFA World Cup.¹⁷ Each one of these evictions affects an individual's capacity to live with dignity and in fullness.

Given this evidence, it is critical that the most marginalised members of a prospective host city are both considered and included as key stakeholders in the bidding and hosting process. Even when host cities prioritise the concentration of new developments in derelict urban sectors, such as the London Olympics, this "may lead to a gentrification process, whereby the needs of the poor and of social justice get overlooked."¹⁸

Sydney 2000: "The best Olympics ever"¹⁹

The Olympic site at Homebush was a former industrial area with high levels of toxic waste and is now a major sporting and recreational centre for Sydney. In preparation for the games, more than 100,000 individuals, including 50,000 volunteers, received technical and further education training.²⁰ However, these accomplishments came at a cost. After the games the Australian state auditor estimated that the true long-term debt from the event was \$2.2 billion.²¹ The social costs were also high. While the government more than trebled the amount of emergency accommodation beds in the city for the homeless, this lacked any link to a long-term plan. It appeared more like a short-term solution to "clean up" Sydney's streets than a positive contribution to a significant social challenge.²²



THE BENEFITS AND COSTS FOR BRAZIL AS A HOST NATION.

International sporting events are often seen as a way for countries to display new-found economic status. Brazil is one of the fastest growing economies in the world; although it has slowed more recently, Brazil's rapid growth in the past decades had, by 2011, made the country the world's sixth largest economy.²³

Brazil is the host country for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, and Rio de Janeiro will be the host city for the 2016 Summer Olympics. In preparation, Brazil has begun an unprecedented number of public infrastructure projects, including major road construction, airport renovations, transport links and other such developments. While there will no doubt be some synergies in hosting the two events within two years, according to a study by the University of São Paulo, Brazil will spend roughly \$18 billion (nearly \$14 billion from tax payer's money) on infrastructure ahead of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. In addition to this amount, costs for the Olympics in 2016 are estimated to be over \$15 billion.²⁴

This expenditure is taking place despite broad general public opposition as found in a recent opinion poll in the Brazilian newspaper "The State of Minas," which concluded that more than 75 percent of Brazilians think the money spent on the FIFA World Cup is unnecessary, and more than 82 percent think that the money would be better spent on education or health.²⁵

Despite recent economic growth there are substantial income inequalities in Brazil. The poorest 10 percent of Brazil's population earn just 0.8 percent of the country's income.²⁶ There are approximately 11 million people who live in favelas in Brazil, who do not have adequate access to basic necessities such as clean, safe water, electricity and sewerage. There are substantial income inequalities in Brazil.

Caritas Australia has been partnering with the Movimento de Defesa do Los Favelados de São Paulo (Movement for the Defence of Favela Residents or MDF) in Brazil for 29 years to help communities in favelas – many of whom do not hold deeds for their homes or do not have any property rights – understand their rights and seek legal protection. In the lead up to the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics, Brazilian authorities have deemed many favelas as "irregular communities" and have evicted hundreds of thousands of residents so that planned projects can go ahead.²⁷

In many cases, residents are evicted so that roads can be widened, stadiums can be built, or other infrastructure work can be completed. As early as 2010 COHRE was raising concerns over forced evictions that have often been carried out with little notice or consultation and with insufficient compensation paid to local residents in several states in Brazil.²⁸



By May 2013, the Popular Committee for the World Cup, a Brazilian Coalition of which MDF is a member, called on construction work to be halted until Brazil adopted a plan to fairly compensate those who had been subject to eviction, and to implement a "protocol to guarantee human rights in the event of evictions." At the time, it was estimated that approximately 200,000 people had been forcibly evicted in the lead up to the FIFA World Cup – one in every 1,000 people in Brazil.²⁹

André, an educator at MDF, states that "when families suffer evictions, the impact on their lives is very great. They lose places in the school for their kids, lose their work, and their relationships suffer." Housing rights involve more than the right to shelter. They include many other interdependent rights, including affordability in housing, freedom from discrimination in access to housing and the right to determine where and how to live.³⁰

Case study: The Movement for the Defence of Favela Residents (MDF) and the World Cup

MDF's mission is to defend and promote the citizenship of the inhabitants of the favelas in the area of politics, pedagogy, art and religious freedom. MDF operates across 40 favelas in São Paulo, a city that has experienced evictions due to preparations for the World Cup.

MDF, with support from Caritas Australia, has provided activities such as leadership formation for children and adolescents through a cultural centre in the favela of Vila Prudente.

However, the Vila Prudente favela is located in a corridor between the city centre, the airport and the stadium where the opening of the World Cup will be held. With the recent arrival of the subway connecting this area to the city there has been a dramatic increase in real estate speculation. MDF has been working for many years with the community to secure a guarantee of tenure, but with pressure on prices in the housing market deeds of ownership are now even more important to the residents. The city council planned to remove the favela and all of its residents, however MDF worked hard to advocate alongside the residents committee to retain it.

Nevertheless, the residents of the Vila Prudente favela still have not been assured of any security, and remain highly vulnerable and at high risk of eviction. MDF has also been seeking improvements in the housing conditions and basic services for residents.

CAN MEGA SPORTING EVENTS BE MORE JUST AND SUSTAINABLE?

FIFA and the IOC could each play a significant role to ensure that the reach and impacts of the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games contribute positively to host nation's long-term development. To do this, a just and sustainable approach is necessary at all stages of the bidding and hosting process.

The United Nations Brundtland Commission's report defined sustainable development as that "which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".³¹ For Caritas Australia, sustainable development with the full realisation of human dignity and wellbeing for all people lies at the heart of our mission.

A framework of sustainable, dignity-focused development could inform planning and implementation of mega sporting events by ensuring that the event:

- contributes to the sustainable development of the host city and region;
- is conceived from as an opportunity to address serious urban and regional challenges, and to promote development solutions;
- leads to the management of all local and regional resources in such a way that event requirements can be fulfilled, while also safeguarding the cultural integrity, biological diversity and life support systems of the host city and region;
- includes public opinion through genuine consultation processes at the earliest planning stages, throughout the event, and even after the event is over; and
- benefits equally all layers of the host population.³²

Some aspects a more holistic focus, such as that proposed above, have already taken place. The FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games are increasingly seen as socioeconomic endeavours rather than largely economic and sporting endeavours, both internally and by host country citizens.³³ In order to ensure long term benefits, however, this change will need to be supported by event organisers finding new measurements of success that go beyond the typical economic measurement of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), to including the distribution of that income and the distribution of any social impact – positive or negative.

Comprehensive stakeholder consultation is a key part of the achievement of a more sustainable event. The infrastructure needs to be designed in consultation with civil society and the marginalised in order to ensure inclusive, sustainable economic results. A pro-poor agenda would see the most marginalised and vulnerable communities at the centre of decision making. Currently, however, host governments, commercial affiliates, stadium authorities and service providers and suppliers are deemed as the key stakeholders. A country's poorest communities rarely gain a voice within the bidding or organising committees.³⁴ This tension makes it difficult for organising bodies to optimise resources and maximise the potential impacts to all layers of the population, since effective long term development requires that communities are the architects of their own future.



WORLD CUP: TOWARDS AN ECONOMICALLY, SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE EVENT.

The FIFA World Cup is held every four years. There have been 19 FIFA World Cup events held in 16 countries across the globe since the inaugural tournament in 1930.

FIFA has changed the bidding process for prospective host nations on a number of occasions. Applications are normally invited eight years before the FIFA World Cup with a deadline to submit full details of a bid seven years before the event. This provides hosts with a significant period of time within which to plan for and implement a sustainable event.

In achieving its mission of “building a better future”, FIFA aims to channel the power of football and its influence on the game and its stakeholders towards making positive impacts on society and the environment.³⁵ In recent years FIFA has invested considerably in its corporate social responsibility strategy and World Cup sustainability program, which includes a sizable Legacy Trust.

As part of a new FIFA initiative, host nations are required to develop a Sustainability Strategy Concept to “reduce the negative and increase the positive impact [of the games] on society and the environment”.³⁶ Though the strategy includes a “comprehensive stakeholder analysis” it is important to note that NGOs and local communities are classed as “other stakeholders” rather than as “key stakeholders”.

In order to ensure that hosts’ stakeholder analyses are truly comprehensive, FIFA needs to ensure that local communities, especially the most marginalised, can participate in genuine consultation from the outset of the project, so that their voice is heard and their rights protected.

In developing its World Cup strategy, the Brazil Local Organising Committee (LOC) used two internationally recognised guidelines: the *ISO26000 Social Responsibility Guidelines*³⁷ ; and the *Sustainability Reporting Guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)*.³⁸ After the strategy was completed, an action plan with concrete measures was developed in order to implement the strategy and track progress. These measurements will help determine the success of the event. It is however unclear what recourse FIFA has if the LOC breaches any of the objectives set out in the strategy or fails to live up to any of the commitments made in their bid around social sustainability and the protection of rights. The question of accountability is key.

At the completion of the games, FIFA and the LOC will publish a sustainability report. South Africa produced such a sustainability report after it hosted the last World Cup in 2010; however that report focused almost exclusively on environmental sustainability. Brazil will be the first World Cup to produce a comprehensive sustainability report that covers both social and environmental aspects of the event footprint. Brazil’s report will therefore be pivotal, and will set the benchmark for reporting by future hosts.



OLYMPIC GAMES: TOWARDS AN ECONOMICALLY, SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE EVENT.

The modern Olympic Games are considered the world's foremost sporting event, with over 200 nations participating every four years. Bidding to host the Olympics officially begins nine years before the event, when cities submit an application file to the IOC. After a series of submissions and interviews the Host City is elected by the IOC members seven years before the Olympic Games.

The Olympic Games are governed by the Olympic Charter. The mission and role of the IOC as outlined in this Charter includes the responsibility to "encourage and support a responsible concern for environmental issues, [and] to promote sustainable development in sport".³⁹

The Olympic movement has implemented measures in an effort to guarantee a positive and sustainable impact on host cities, including the Transfer of Knowledge Program, the addition of the concept of legacy to the Host City Contract, the Olympic Games Impact (OGI) study and the Olympic Movement Agenda 21. However, little progress has been made on the understanding of the inter-relationship between the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development, and to date a large part of the focus of the IOC and host nations has been put on the environmental dimension of sustainability.⁴⁰

To fast-track the developments needed to host the Olympic Games, it is often deemed necessary to break administrative barriers. In Sydney, the mission of Games organisers and public bodies was expedited because the State Government was able to pass legislation that exempted the Olympic construction projects from the normal appeal processes.⁴¹ While this may be justified for Olympic projects with overall public interest, if abused they may also represent threats to fundamental democratic principles, and may disproportionately affect the most marginalised members of the community who are often excluded from genuine consultation.

The OGI study was launched in 2000 as a new requirement of the Olympics bidding process. It proposes a set of 126 indicators to measure the potential economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts of the Games on a host city and nation. It covers a period of 11 years – two years prior to the Host City election, through to two years after having staged the Games. In total, four reports are produced throughout the process.⁴² For the OGI study to have a tangible impact on economic, socio-cultural and environmental development in host cities, the IOC must ensure that lessons learnt from previous hosts are incorporated into future bidding nations' plans and that hosts are held accountable to the targets that were set in the bidding process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Caritas Australia calls on World Sporting Bodies, including FIFA and the IOC, to:

1. **Protect Human Rights:** Immediately implement any measures deemed necessary to protect the human rights of host city populations, including the right to fair wages and the right to determine where and how to live.
2. **Secure a Common Good:** Deepen efforts to ensure that sustainable development principles are integrated into *all* phases of your events: conceptualisation, feasibility, bidding, strategic and operational planning, operations and dissolution.
3. **Amplify the voice of local communities, especially the most marginalised:** Ensure that all people in host cities and countries, especially the most marginalised, can participate in decisions that affect their lives. These exchanges must be meaningful and event organisers must be required to respond to public concerns through a transparent and accessible complaints mechanism.
4. **Ensure the dignity of each person:** Broaden current reporting to include contractually binding minimum standards which mitigate impacts on local communities. These guidelines should require host authorities to pay communities fair and equitable compensation when far-reaching impacts are unavoidable, and create means of redress if these guidelines are not followed.

Caritas Australia calls on civil society to:

1. **Encourage open dialogue:** Encourage open and honest dialogue on the implementation of a pro-poor agenda between civil society and organisers of mega sporting events.
2. **Advocate for justice:** Amplify the voice of the marginalised through advocacy to raise awareness of the impact of mega sporting events on the poor and to effect change.

Caritas Australia calls on all people across Australia to:

1. **Raise awareness:** Increase awareness in your local community, school or parish by showing the brief [Sports for Justice video](#) or hosting a Sports for Justice event.
2. **Stand in solidarity:** [Sign the Caritas Australia petition](#) to FIFA and the IOC asking them to protect the rights of the most marginalised people in the host cities of their events.
3. **Raise money to support the work of MDF and Caritas Australia's partner organisations:** Hold a [fundraiser](#) in your local community to support our life-changing work.
4. **Pray for the marginalised:** Say [a prayer](#) for those most affected by the negative aspects of mega sporting events.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the current experience in Brazil that more protection needs to be put in place to ensure that mega sporting events are not only spectacular, but equitable for all. Future hosts of mega sporting events, including FIFA World Cup hosts Russia and Qatar and Olympic hosts South Korea and Japan, should learn a lot from the Brazilian experience. Despite all these nations being in very different economic positions, protecting rights and including the marginalised in decision making is critical to the success of any mega sporting event.

The FIFA World Cup and the Olympics can only be sustainable and just to the extent that there is a deliberate will to make them so. Embracing these principles is certainly an important first step, but putting them in operation is the most important and yet is also the most difficult, being constantly challenged by financial limitations, time constraints and political will.

The FIFA World Cup, the Olympics and other mega sporting events often fostered goodwill across the world; however until a change in approach is made to put the poorest of the poor at the centre of these events it is highly doubtful that the economic, social and environmental benefits of mega sporting events for host cities will automatically 'trickle down' to marginalised communities.

In his Apostolic Exaltation Pope Francis wrote that "some people continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world. [...] Meanwhile, the excluded are still waiting."⁴³

Caritas Australia sees the Pope's words as our own – the excluded should not be forced to wait. It is our responsibility to stand in solidarity with the most marginalised and to ensure that our actions, whether around the board table, in the classroom or on the soccer field, demonstrate our compassion for the poor.

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- ¹⁵ www.cohre.org
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- ¹⁹ At the conclusion of the Sydney 2000 games the then IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch described the event as "the best Olympic Games ever". <http://corporate.olympics.com.au/games/2000-sydney>.
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- ²¹ Robert von Rekowsky. 2013. "Are the Olympics a golden opportunity for Investors?" Investment Insights Leadership Series, August 2013. p11.
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